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quick facts on...

Sam Jones/Abiaki Prairie C-139 Annex Restoration Project

MARCH 2014

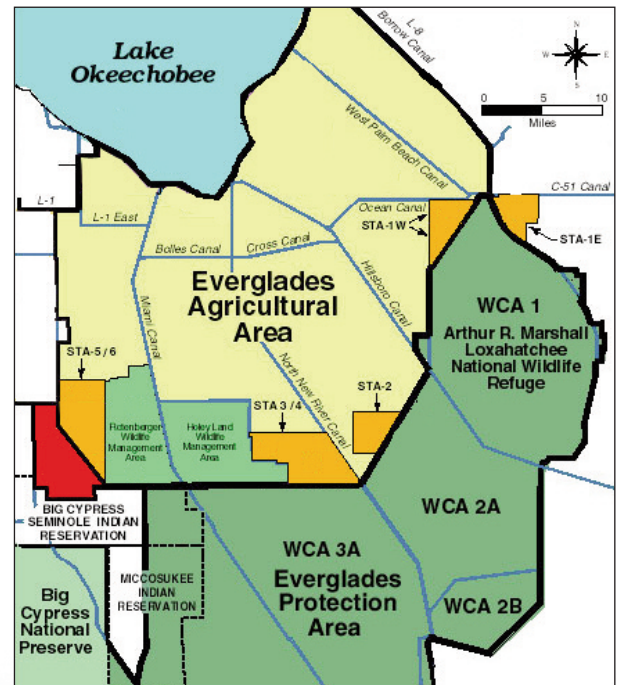
The South Florida Water Management District

is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply.

The Sam Jones/Abiaki Prairie is 15,000 acres of former citrus grove that will be restored to an expansive wet prairie system with depression marshes, cypress domes and hardwood hammocks.

The project will provide hydrologic benefits to the groundwater, surface water and water supply. The project will provide water for the environment, and also complement other comprehensive efforts to improve water quality for the Everglades. Once restoration is completed, the site will be evaluated for recreational opportunities compatible with permitting requirements and the purposes of the project.



The 15,000-acre project site is shaded red in this map.

The Land

The Sam Jones/Abiaki Prairie property is situated between the Seminole Tribe of Florida Big Cypress Reservation and Stormwater Treatment Area 5/6 in southeastern Hendry County.

At the District's invitation, the Seminole Tribe chose to name the property the Sam Jones/Abiaki Prairie after their great spiritual leader and hero (known by both names) who was thought to have lived on the property. Several tribal maps indicate his 19th century village was at the crossroads of numerous historical trails located on this site.

The District is coordinating with leaders of the Seminole Tribe of Florida to restore the environmentally sensitive land.

Historically, environmental features on the site included an Everglades mosaic of wet prairie, sloughs, depression marshes and tree islands, as well as a drier prairie, wet flatwoods, oak hammocks and cypress swamp.

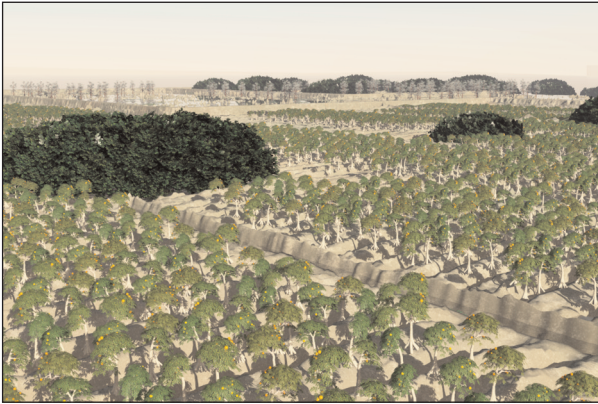
The restoration is designed to attract wildlife back to the site including hares, turkeys, hawks, eagles, bobcats, black bears and panthers.

As restoration progresses, native wildlife such as bears are expected to return to the land.



The Restoration Plan

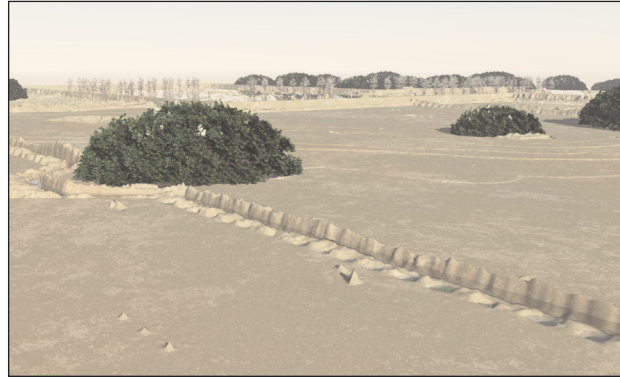
The restoration plan seeks to approximate the historical function of the ecosystem as much as possible. The restoration will occur in two major phases, with the completion of the first smaller phase supplying the native plant material for the much larger second phase. It is anticipated that the major restoration work will begin in 2015 and be completed by 2020. The project will be implemented partially with mitigation funds from limestone mining activities in the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt region. The Florida Statute governing mining mitigation requirements allows funds to be used for the purchase, enhancement, restoration and management of wetlands and uplands in the Everglades watershed.



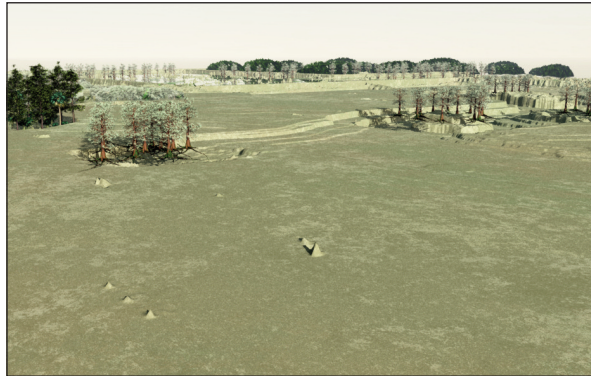
Initial Condition: 10,000 acres of citrus with degraded natural areas and a surface water management system that includes an extensive network of canals and ponds.



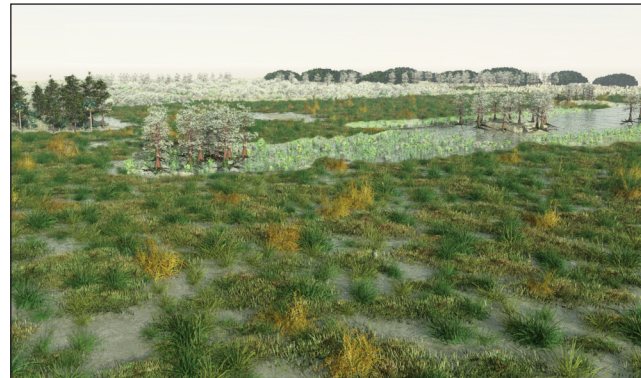
The bold outline on this map is the project location. There are three historical trails that meet at the site.



Step 1: Removal of citrus trees, removal of 100 shallow wells and the leveling of planting beds.



Step 2: Treatment of invasive exotic plant species, plugging major drainage canals and excavating sloughs and dry season wetlands.



Step 3: Follow-up exotic treatments and planting native wetland species over a period of several years.



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